

## Long Beach Airport Soaring Dreams Project

For more than 37 years, the Long Beach Airport Air Traffic Control Tower has stood as a welcoming beacon to millions of travelers and pilots. On January 17, 2007 Mayor Bob Foster, along with students from Hughes Middle School kicked off the Long Beach Airport, Ameriquest Soaring Dreams Air Tower Project and began the work to transform the tower into a vibrant artistic monument. Working inside of a hangar donated by Westland, the students and the Mayor, painted the first panels of the artwork that will eventually measure 8,000 square feet and be affixed to the Air Traffic Control Tower located at Spring Street and Redondo Avenue. By the time the artwork is completed hundreds of children, from the Boys & Girls Clubs, PAL, LBUSD, Miller Children's Hospital and Tomorrow's Aeronautical Museum will have contributed their masterpieces and signed their names.

The nonprofit program, Portraits of Hope, is the engine behind the project. It's meant to be a motivational tool for children, as well as an education for the school children in art, education and creative therapy. As they create their panels, the youth are led in discussions about social issues, community goals and achievements and the benefits of teamwork.

The Ameriquest Soaring Dreams Air Tower Project is privately funded and was founded by brothers Ed and Bernie Massey. The project already has helped transform public objects like the Ameriquest blimp, which docked at Long Beach Airport recently, but also turned airplanes, buildings, oil drilling towers, tugboats and NASCAR racing cars into objects of art.



This history-making project, which was approved by the FAA and supported by local and national elected officials, represents the first-ever transformation of an air traffic control tower in the United States into a dazzling work of public art.

The Long Beach project is running concurrently with another in New York City, where children are painting floral designs on thousands of taxicabs.

The students are expected to complete the paintings in early March, with artwork being affixed to the tower in early April, 2007.

